

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic Sonoma Grammar School  
and/or common Sonoma Community Center

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**2. Location**

OHP

street & number 276 E. Napa St. not for publication

city, town Sonoma vicinity of congressional district 1st CA

state California code 06 county Sonoma code 097

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
<u>  </u> district	<u>  </u> public	<u>X</u> occupied	<u>  </u> agriculture
<u>X</u> building(s)	<u>X</u> private	<u>  </u> unoccupied	<u>  </u> commercial
<u>  </u> structure	<u>  </u> both	<u>  </u> work in progress	<u>X</u> educational
<u>  </u> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<u>X</u> entertainment
<u>  </u> object	<u>  </u> in process	<u>X</u> yes: restricted	<u>X</u> government
	<u>  </u> being considered	<u>X</u> yes: unrestricted	<u>  </u> industrial
		<u>  </u> no	<u>  </u> military
			<u>  </u> museum
			<u>  </u> park
			<u>  </u> private residence
			<u>X</u> religious
			<u>  </u> scientific
			<u>  </u> transportation
			<u>X</u> other: Social Serv.

**4. Owner of Property**

name The Sonoma Community Center, Inc., A Non-Profit Corporation

street & number 276 E. Napa St.

city, town Sonoma vicinity of state CA 95476

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Sonoma County Recorder's Office

street & number 2555 Mendocino Ave., P.O. Box 6124

city, town Santa Rosa state CA 95406

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Sonoma Valley Historical Resources Survey

has this property been determined eligible?    yes X no

date Completed May, 1979

   federal    state    county X local

depository for survey records Sonoma City Hall, 1 The Plaza

city, town Sonoma state CA 95476

## 7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Sonoma Grammar School is a free-standing, Classical Revival, two-story building situated on the front half of a two-acre parcel. The front elevation of the structure is about 50' from a main thoroughfare. The building is U-shaped, symmetrical, and in very good condition.

The front (south) elevation is 177' long and divided into 5 different vertical elements. The center element (30' wide x 36') is a Classical portico with pediment, cornice, and four free-standing terra cotta, Ionic columns 21' high and 2'6" in diameter at the base. These columns frame an entry that is 12' wide, 22' high with double doors, side-lites and a large top-lite composed of 28 panes. The entire entry is framed in American Oak.

At either end of the front elevation, two secondary entry points 34' wide and 33' high project out about 6' from the face of the building. These entry points have massive, rusticated, red brick pilasters, and are topped by Neo-Classical parapets. The recessed alcove that protects the double-door is of light cream brick veneer with geometrical designs in the brick work.

Between the main entryway and the secondary entry points are two somewhat recessed areas approximately 37' wide and 33' high.

Windows on the front facade are grouped in 6 bays of five, and are double-hung, sash windows with fluted wood trim. Four bays are at the main floor level, and two at the basement level.

The brick exterior of the front elevation is laid in a common bond pattern with a syth every sixth row and a soldier course at the bottom, which rests upon a massive concrete base some 4' high. A belt course of cream-colored pressed brick runs the length of the facade. It is topped by a 2' wide cornice with dentils and ogee molding above and below. The cornice also runs the length of the front elevation, as does a 3' high brick parapet with a brick cap.

The east and west elevations are both 120' long and 33' high, and continue the belt course, cornice, parapet, and red brick veneer of the front elevation. On the west elevation, 4 recessed windows provide a decorative lighting for the auditorium that occupies the west wing. Each window has 3 vertical lites in the bottom sash, and an 8 lite star pattern in the top sash. An elaborate geometrical pattern of brick decorates the wall under each window. Beneath three of these at the ground level, are pairs of double-hung wood frame sash. Double-doors open out under the fourth design.

The east elevation does not have the decorative bay windows or geometrical brick work. Its windows are clustered in 6 groups of 5 windows each. (Continued on continuation sheets)

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The rear elevation is 177' long, 33' high and U-shaped. Wings on either end of the building enclose a plain concrete courtyard. The frieze, cornice, and dentils continue for about 2/3 of the length of each wing of the U, and then are replaced by a red brick frieze and corbelled cornice. The parapet and massive concrete base continue for the entire length of the rear elevation. Thirty-seven wood frame, double-hung windows look onto the courtyard.

Notable architectural features of the interior include:

1. A 9' wide, 16' long concrete stairway with simple oak handrails, leading from the main entry to the main floor;
2. Massive oak staircases with square balusters, and shaped hand rails at either end of the main hall;
3. Coved, 12' high, lath and plaster ceilings;
4. Lath and plaster walls with picture molding and wainscoting trim of vertical grain Douglas Fir;
5. Built-in corner cabinets of Douglas Fir with glass doors;
6. Vertical interior windows to light the main hallways upstairs and down;
7. Numerous white globe lights;
8. Panel doors of Douglas Fir with obscure glass transoms and brass fittings, with molding 6" wide of Douglas Fir;
9. 12" wide decorative base board of Douglas Fir.

A particularly outstanding feature of the interior is the theater-auditorium that occupies the west wing of the building. The auditorium's main floor is 30' wide and 60' long with a 24' high coved ceiling; it comfortably seats 200 people. The balcony is 30' x 30' with fixed wooden seats for another 100 people. The elevated stage has an ornamental arch of stucco water lilies culminating in 2 plaster cherubs. The arch is 24' wide and 16' high. Acoustics in the auditorium are excellent.

In 1924, the rear wings of the original building were enclosed in larger wings. Both the interior and exterior details and architectural features were duplicated exactly, and the additions were entirely compatible with the original structure. In all, 2800 sq. ft. were added both upstairs and down.

FHR-8-300A  
(11/78)

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Except for some weathering, the rusting of sheet metal used to cover the cornice, and the painting of the oak trim on the outside of the entryways, the exterior of the building retains its integrity to its 1916 and 1924 appearance.. Some remodeling has occurred on the interior, including substantial rewiring, the replacement of some globes with florescent lights, and minor alterations in several rooms. These alterations are routine in nature and do not materially detract from the integrity of the building.

The building is situated in a neat, quiet residential area on a main thoroughfare, and is less than 2 blocks from the historic Sonoma Plaza, listed on the National Register of Historic pPlaces in 1975.

## 8. Significance

Period	Area of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archaeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archaeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1916, Addit., 1924 Builder/Architect A. C. Lutgens

### Statement of Significance (In one paragraph)

The Sonoma Grammar School possesses great architectural, historical, and educational significance for this area because of its structural uniqueness, its authenticity, its ease of accessibility, and its role in the development of the community. Moreover, in its present role as The Sonoma Community Center, it continues to be an important cultural, educational, and social institution, with a rapidly expanding program of community services.

Architecturally, The Sonoma Grammar School is significant because it is a splendidly preserved, large-scale example of a pre-World War I neo-Classical Revival school building of a kind increasingly rare in California. It is the only building of its kind in Sonoma, the largest brick structure in town and likely the last of its kind that will ever be built in this area.

Historically, it is significant because it signals the importance placed on education by this small, rural community. When it was constructed, it was the grandest building in Sonoma, and its construction must have strained the resources of the people. For over 30 years, until building code changes forced the building's abandonment as a school, the grade school children of Sonoma learned in this building the fundamentals of education, democracy, and Americanism. The school was, in fact, a miniature "melting pot", where the children of parents who often could not even speak English learned to work and play together and respect one another's differences.

Although it is no longer operated as an educational facility, the building continues to play an important part in the recreational, cultural, and intellectual life of the Sonoma Valley as the home of the Sonoma Community Center.

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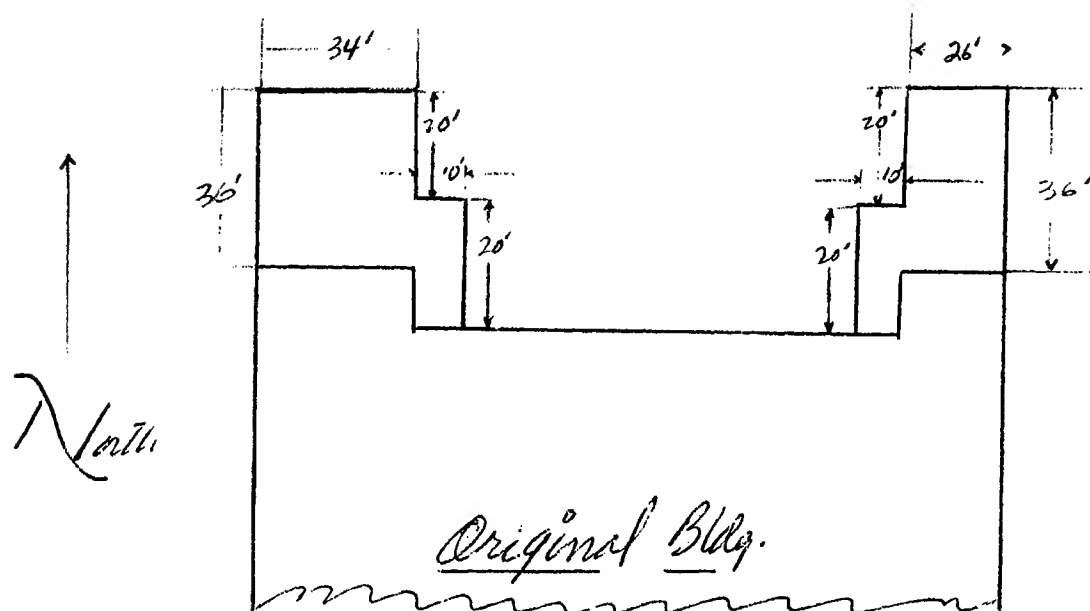
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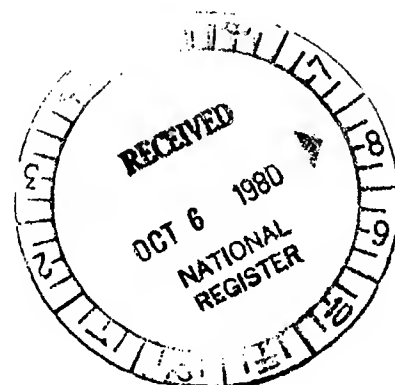
The architect of the Sonoma Grammar School was A.C. Lutgens, a modestly successful San Francisco builder and designer who had grown up in the Sonoma Valley and attended the old grammar school his building eventually replaced. Among Mr. Lutgens other buildings, the most famous is the widely known Sonoma City Hall, which was constructed in 1905, and which has already gained inclusion in the National Register.

Sec. 7 (Description)

Shaded areas added to rear elevation  
in 1924



Sonoma Grammar School  
Sonoma, Sonoma County, California



MAP #1

# Episcopal Church

private residence

Sonoma Grammar School  
Sonoma, Sonoma County, California

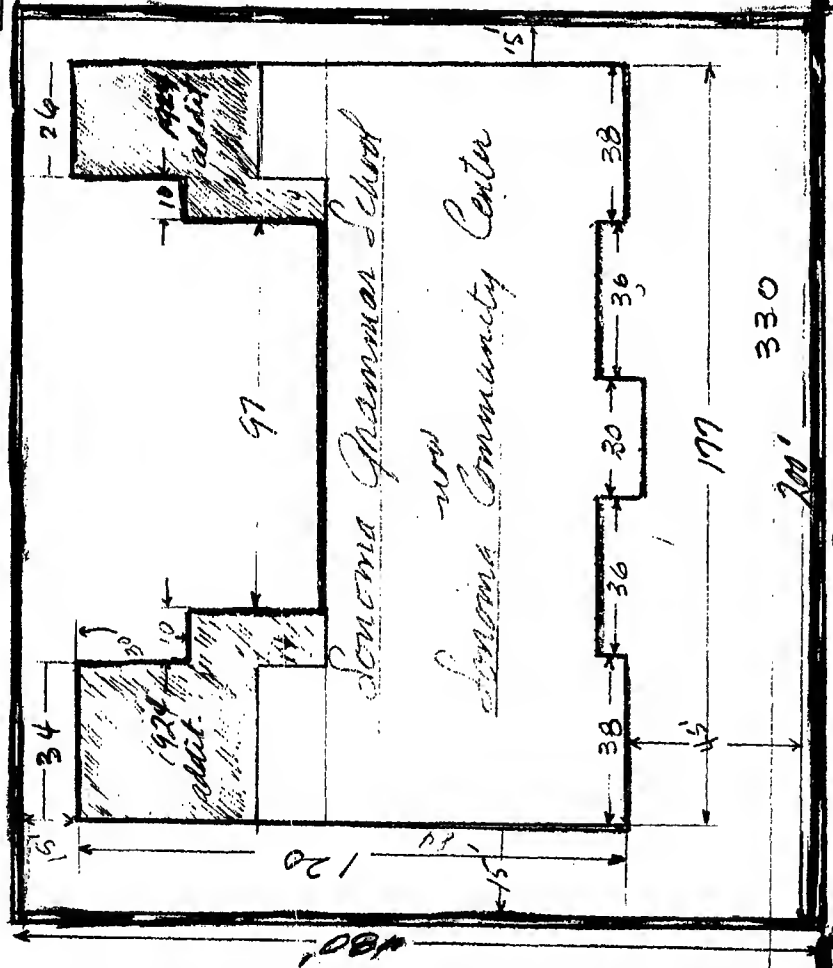
Only the area outlined in red is to be included in the National Register listing. The total lot is outlined in heavy black.

Buildings A, B, & C are not included in the application for recognition & designation.

A

B

C



Napa St. East

private residence

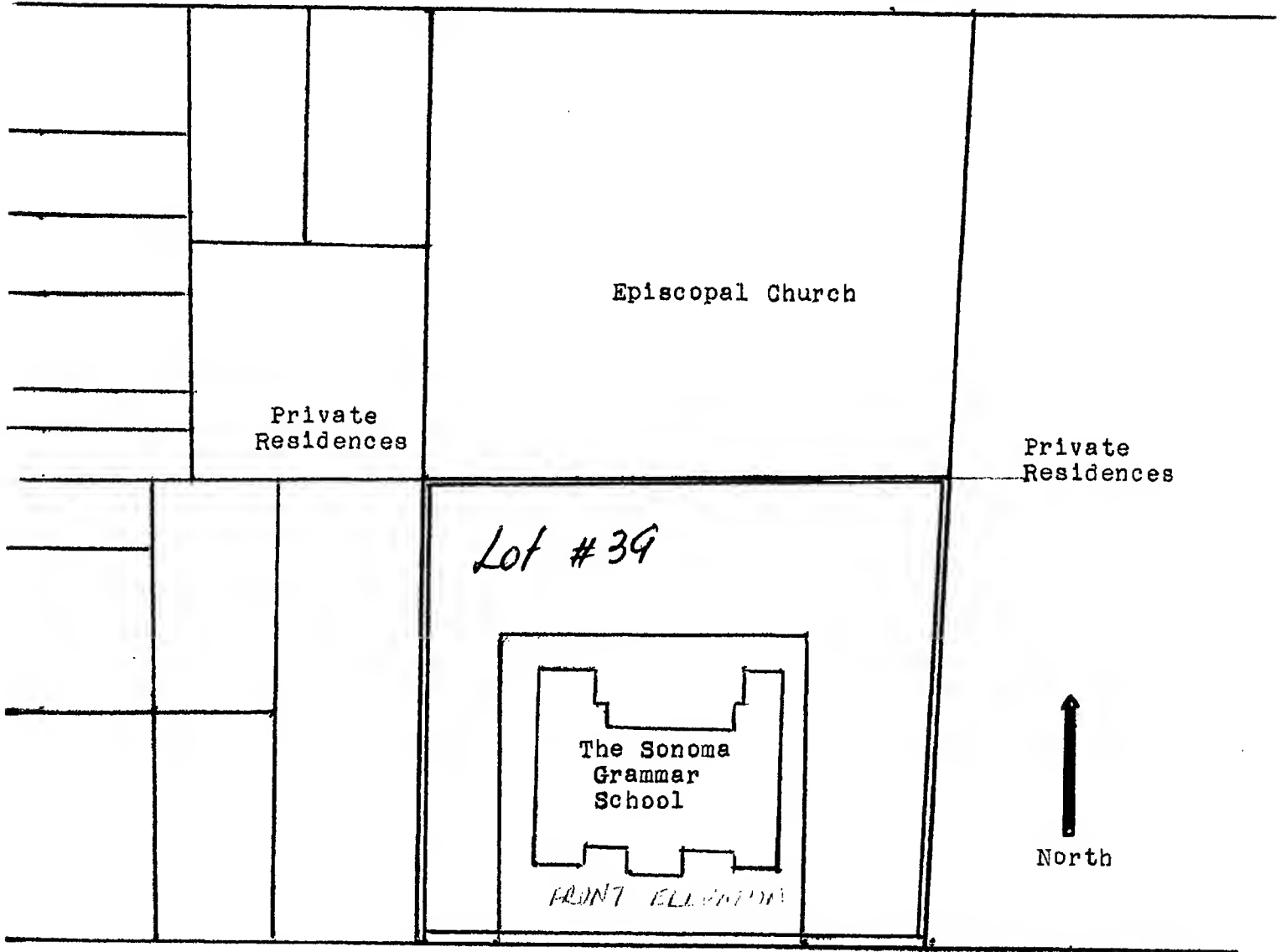
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MAP #2

Sonoma Grammar School  
Sonoma, Sonoma Caounty California

The map below is a tracing of the page of the Official Map of The City of Sonoma showing the parcel occupied by the Sonoma Grammar School (Sonoma Community Center). The entire parcel is outlined in double black lines; the portion of the total parcel being considered for recognition is shaded in red.

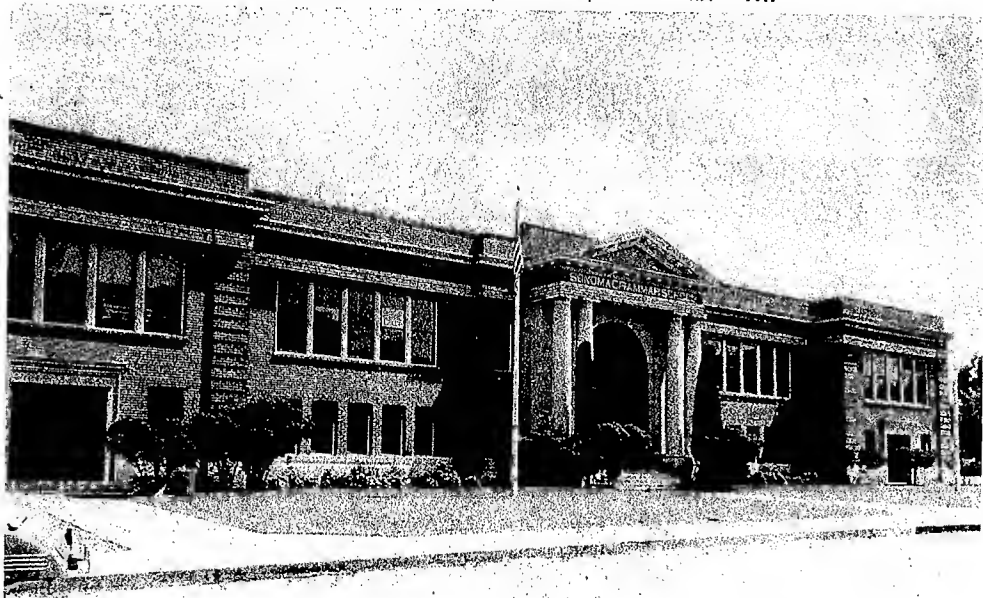


E. Napa St.

3rd.  
St.  
East

OCT 8 1980

SONOMA GRAMMAR SCHOOL, SONOMA, CALIFORNIA 7119



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